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The Friend of Missions

A Journal of Old Time Religion and Sound Missionary Work

**"'Tis the Old Time Religion —
And it's good enough for me."**

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("In the year of our Lord" may soon have a double meaning)

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

REV. M. BILLESTER.
Home Director for the U.S. A. & Canada of the Russian Missionary Society and the Russian Faith Mission.

The announcement is hereby made to all Christian friends in the United States of America and Canada, that the only rightful representatives of The Russian Missionary Society, and The Russian Faith Mission for the North American Continent, are the Rev. Michael Billester, our Home Director, and Mrs. A. E. Billester, our Treasurer for U.S.A. and Canada, 721, North Stanley Avenue, Los Angeles, California. All correspondence, enquiries, and donations should be sent exclusively to the above address.

No other persons in America are entitled to receive any contributions or correspondence for our work. Remember that the only address for our work in America is The Russian Faith Mission, 721 North Stanley Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

Signed on behalf of The General Financial Board of The Russian Missionary Society and The Russian Faith Mission,

F. J. Miles,
General Secretary,

Charles Phillips,
Treasurer-in-chief.

MEMORIES OF A CHRISTMAS IN RUSSIA

By **Dr. A. McCaig,** Principal Emeritus of Spurgeon's College, London, England

Christmas is nearing, and my thoughts go back to the wonderful scenes witnessed in St. Petersburg of old Russia, at the Opening of the Dom Evangelia on the Russian Christmas Day in 1911 (actually Jan. 7th, 1912).

We certainly had Xmas weather — the Xmas weather of the Christmas cards. We had been in St. Petersburg in summer, but what a difference now in winter. Snow and ice everywhere. The River Neva upon which we had often pleasantly sailed, now solid ice, with a small tramway laid across upon which we could travel, the alternative means of transit being sledges. Icicles formed on beard and moustache, tramway windows were covered over with thick frost, and I had a narrow escape of getting an ear frostbitten. But what mattered these externals? We had come to rejoice with Pastor Fetler, and the Russian Believers in the fruition of their hopes, the answer to their prayers, the crown of their efforts.

A WONDERFUL OPENING TIME.

That was a wonderful time indeed. It marked an epoch in Pastor Fetler's great work. It was the climax of much successful Gospel labour, which had been carried on for five crowded years.

Then we had the privilege of meeting some leading preachers of Russia, who had come from far and near to show their sympathy with Brother Fetler, and share in the joy of the great occasion. Among these were Pastor Golaieff, President of the Russian Baptist Union, a gracious, gifted brother; Pastor Mazaieff, Treasurer, a gentleman of considerable means, and also "rich in faith and good works", who, alas, subsequently lost his earthly all, and life itself in the Bolshevik Revolution; Pastor Stepanoff then in charge of the church in Moscow founded by Mr. Fetler, with whom I had much fellowship on subsequent occasions; and sturdy Pastor Pavloff of Odessa, who, under the old regime had been "in prisons oft" for "the sake of the Name".

Among others who took part were Pastor Kargell, representing the "Evangelical Christians," a venerable man of God, and Pastor Arndt of the German Baptist Church, where, on a former occasion, I had the privilege of preaching the Gospel.

Besides these, Delegates from churches, and visitors from all parts of Russia gathered with us: from Livonia and Esthonia, from Moscow, Rostoff and Odessa, from the Crimea and the Caucasus, and from far Siberia the loving brothers and sisters had gladly made the pilgrimage, eager to show their love for the young pastor, who under God had been used to erect such a splendid centre for Gospel and Baptist work in the capital of the great Russian Empire.

SUNDAY MORNING MEETING OF BELIEVERS.

I think of the meeting on the Sunday morning, when only Believers were present, 800 or more, including the delegates and visitors. What a time of blessing it was! Out of a full heart Pastor Fetler offered the Opening prayer, which, of necessity, was predominantly praise.

Then we had singing of the most jubilant character, and a season of united prayer: then singing by the choirs. I say choirs, because besides Fetler's home choir, the Esthonians had brought a choir of their own, and I think, also the Livonians, and they sang gloriously in their respective languages. Then again ensued a season of united prayer, and yet again united praise and prayer.

Dr. MacArthur, President of the Baptist World Alliance, spoke briefly giving American congratulations. Then I said a few words, and Mr. Charles Phillips, who had just arrived from London that morning, spoke briefly, giving congratulations as Treasurer of the Russian Evangelization Society.

The Communion Service followed, and the first stage of the Opening proceedings came to a delightful close.

THE PUBLIC OPENING MEETING.

Memory lingers a little over the great Public Meeting which was announced for four o'clock, but it was nearer five ere we actually found it possible to commence. The building was crowded in every part, and many had to be turned away. The account of it I have given in "Wonders of Grace in Russia", and I only here recall the general impression. It was indeed one of the most marvellous meetings I ever attended. On all hands one could feel the suppressed excitement of the great audience. Every one seemed to hang on every word spoken. Pastor Fetler, who preached the opening sermon, after much singing and prayer had produced the right atmosphere, seemed lifted beyond himself, and spoke with great power. The impressive Christmas Message from Dr. MacArthur, who spoke from "Glory to God in the Highest", well sustained the interest, and all the other utterances were on a high level, while over all, and through all, there was the brooding sense of the Presence of God, and the consciousness of the moving of the Spirit of God, which we have so often felt in Russian meetings. It was really a great occasion, one of the red-letter days of our experience. The opening services really lasted over a week. Meetings were held, on Monday morning and evening, when opportunity was given for various delegates to speak. On Tuesday evening a lantern lecture on Scripture views was given by Mr. Fetler. This was followed by Mr. Phillips' views and lecture on Africa. On Wednesday evening the meeting was held, specially for students, in the Prince Tenisheff Hall, when Dr. MacArthur gave his powerful lecture on "Christ, the Ideal Man", when many came forward to confess Christ.

GOD SAVE RUSSIA!

On Thursday evening the meeting was linked with the Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer, and a representative of that Society presided. It was on that occasion, as I have recorded, that after my speech, when Dr. MacArthur, was to follow, the Police Officer, who had been at all the meetings, watching the proceedings on behalf of the Government, intimated that a special message from headquarters had come forbidding the foreigners to speak. On my first visit the previous year, there had been no hindrance to our speaking, but in the interval, an old law had been furbished up, which prevented any foreigner from speaking on religious topics, without official permission. Dr. MacArthur and I had paid a visit to the Minister of the Interior with Pastor Fetler and, after a long and strenuous discussion, ably conducted by Mr. Fetler, permission had been given for us to speak at the Opening. It now transpired that the Minister had literally meant the permit to apply to the Opening meeting on the first day.

Another evidence of the restrictions which surrounded us, was found in the action of the Police Official at the same

meeting, sending up a requisition to Pastor Fetler prohibiting the singing of a hymn which he had noted on the programme entitled "God Save Russia"! It was simply a prayer for the spiritual salvation of the people, with no kind of political meaning; but to the official mind it was akin to blasphemy to speak of Russia-**Holy** Russia as needing saving. Alas! today it is terribly evident that Russia needs saving in every sense, and with redoubled earnestness it behoves Christians everywhere to pray "God Save Russia!"

I pass by the Friday evening meeting with its interesting Baptismal service, the Saturday meeting which took the form of a Watchnight service, and the second Sunday service which reached its glorious climax when a large number, when the opportunity was given, streamed to the front and surrendered to Christ. It was then that Dr. McArthur said to me that he had been familiar with Moody's great Evangelistic campaigns, and had seen a great deal of Evangelistic work, but never had he witnessed such spontaneous confessions as at these Russian meetings.

CHRISTMAS MEETING IN MADAME TCHERTKOFF'S HALL.

I ought to refer to another special Christmas touch during this visit. It was a meeting in Madame Tchertkoff's Hall. This was usually held on Friday evening, and I think it must have been the Friday before the opening. In any case it was really a Christmas festival. A Christmas Tree was provided by our generous hostess, who herself loaded it with its varied and attractive fruits. With Gospel song and speech the evening passed happily and profitably. My gift from the Tree was a quaint Russian box, filled with fine Russian tea. That box I still treasure.

I was not able to stay to the close of the meeting, as I had to hurry away to a distant part of the city to speak at a meeting of Esthonian Baptists, who gathered in the old Central Hall which had been Mr. Fetler's Headquarters till the Opening of the Dom Evangelia. Mr. Fetler's sister, Melanie, (known to so many as Sister Nelly) went with me as my interpreter. There was a large gathering of Esthonian friends with all the Esthonian delegates, who had come for the Opening. In giving my message I had the unique experience of being interpreted by Miss Fetler into Russian, and then interpreted into Esthonian by a brother who knew Russian, and the Living Word retained its power throughout. I have still a book sent me later as a souvenir, which I prize though I have not been able to read it — the History of the Esthonian Baptists.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS.

The Russian Church has always made more of Easter than of Christmas, yet Christmas also holds a high place in the esteem of the Christians and we have recollections of Xmas trees in Riga when there in 1926-7, in the Dom Golgotha and in Pastor Fetler's family circle. It was a great sight to see the rows and rows of Trees exhibited in certain streets of the City for sale in view of Christmas, and to note the numerous and eager purchasers.

It has been our custom in connection with the R.M.S. to send out envelopes to our friends for a special Xmas Offering for our Missionaries and their families; and certainly the need for that this year is not less than in previous years. May the loving sympathy of our Readers not be lacking in these difficult times!

Let us all think of the great Fact recalled by Christmas — the Incarnation of Emmanuel, "God with us". God has come near to human life. God has come into human life. God has taken up humanity into union with Himself. But Xmas had to be crowned and consummated by Calvary. Only through the Cross could the promise of Bethlehem's Manger Cradle be fulfilled. We are brought nigh to God "through the Blood of the Cross". "Christ suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He **might bring us to God**".

"The Lord of hosts is with us" sang the saints of old. This truth, in the light of Christmas, we know in a sense of which they could only dream, and we, of the R.M.S. may well take the comfort of the old watchword. The whole history of our Society proves its truth. Opposition has not been wanting: the forces of evil have been definitely, sometimes blatantly against us: but "If God be for us, who can be against us"? Let us take heart, and with the dying Wesley still believe that "Best of All, God is with us".

A CLOSING REFLECTION.

What of all those gathered with us at that Russian Xmas 20 years ago? Dear Madame Tchertkoff, that gracious, queenly lady has gone, leaving the precious aroma of a sainted life to inspire many. Mr. and Mrs Fetler, senior, whom I met then for the first time, and with whom I had much fellowship in later years have been called home, the latter quite recently. Miss Kruse (Baroness) sister of Madame Yasnovsky, and my good interpreter on several occasions, is no longer with us. Dr. MacArthur, whom during this visit I learned to love, having come to know him well as we shared a room for several weeks, has entered into rest. He greatly admired Pastor Fetler and his work, and frequently bore public testimony to that effect. It is worth while in these days, to re-read his noble utterance in the Metropolitan Tabernacle after his return from Russia, when among other things, he said of Mr. Fetler: "Do not be disturbed if you hear from St. Petersburg or Berlin, depreciatory statements concerning him. False reports travel with great rapidity. Pay no attention to the voice of calumny. The presence on his platform at the Opening of the Dom Evangelia, of all the leading Evangelicals in the City attests his fraternal spirit, and also his honourable record. There are few public men more gentle, conciliatory or brotherly than he. I have no hesitation in saying that he is a highminded Christian gentleman, and a humble Christian disciple, quite impervious to flattery and unspoiled by his success."

Madame Yasnovsky, thank God, is still with us, having since, after passing through all the horrors of War, Revolution and Famine, done splendid work for the Master, in this country, America, and Australia, and is now in Paris, still bearing her brave witness for the Lord she learned to love in her youth. By the way, it was at that meeting in Madame Tchertkoff's Hall, that Dr. MacArthur said to me, when he saw Madame kissing a humble sister, "Look at that! a Baroness embracing a peasant woman, that shows what the Spirit of Christ can do."

But alas, most of those who were present around that Christmas Tree, have been exposed to the terrors of Revolution, Famine, and Persecution, and who can say whether any survive?

God be praised that Pastor Fetler, his brother Robert, and sister Melanie are still spared to witness for the Christ of Bethlehem and Calvary.

N. B. Alas! The latest news from Russia is to the effect that the Bolshevists have pulled down the Dom Evangelia, "Our holy and our beautiful house" and a factory is being erected on its site! "How long, O Lord, how long?"

FORWARD MOVEMENT OF RUSSIAN MISSIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

The appointment of the Rev. M. Billester to the position of Home Director for U.S.A. and Canada, of The Russian Missionary Society and The Russian Faith Mission

The International Council, and Financial Board of The Russian Missionary Society, and of The Russian Faith Mission, has pleasure in announcing to the Christian public, the new advancement for the evangelization of the Russian people, through the prayers and aid of Christian people in U.S.A. and Canada.

At a special session of The International Council, and representatives of the Financial Board of our Society, we feel we have been led of the Lord to secure the services of the Rev. Michael Billester of Los Angeles, California, as our chief representative for the whole of the North American Continent, and also to confirm the position of Mrs. A. E. Billester as Treasurer and Secretary of our American office.

The names of Rev. and Mrs. Billester have long been before sympathizers of Russian mission work, through the pages of "The Friend of Missions", and other publications. Brother Michael Billester is a native of the Province of Grodno, of the former Russian Empire. This Province is now incorporated in the Republic of Poland.

A year before the outbreak of the war, as a young man he arrived in Montreal, Canada, in quest of gold. Instead, in the marvellous and divine providence of God, he found Christ. The story of his conversion is very touching, and shows in what different and wonderful ways the Good Shepherd finds His lost sheep. Having been converted, his heart was soon stirred to tell others about the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. At first he thought of simply giving of his income, striving against any possibility of becoming a missionary himself. At that time he was earning from $10.00 to $14.00 a day as a mechanic, and was fast qualifying to occupy a prominent position. But the hand of the Lord was heavy upon him. At last he could resist no longer, and was led to enter The Toronto Bible College. Almost in an unparalleled way, he soon acquired such an excellent knowledge of the English language, that many who heard him speak in meetings could scarcely distinguish that English was not his native tongue. The Lord began soon to use him in winning others to Christ.

His first efforts in this direction were in connection with pioneer missionary work in western Canada. In 1924, he and Mrs. Billester came in touch with Pastor William Fetler, and were accepted as missionaries of the Russian Missionary Society for Poland and Eastern Europe. After some months of evangelistic work in Poland, Mr. Billester was appointed assistant pastor of the Russian Revival Church in Riga, Latvia, where for nearly two years he laboured shoulder to shoulder with Pastor Fetler in a much blessed soul winning ministry. The Revival Hall, which had formerly been a moving picture theatre, soon became so crowded, that believers began to pray for new premises. This led to plans for the purchasing of a site, and the need of erecting a large Gospel Tabernacle.

After Pastor Fetler's visit to America in this connection, and his return to Riga, Mr. Billester was sent as deputation secretary to North America, to secure the friendly interest of God's people in the erection of The Riga Tabernacle, which was later named "The Salvation Temple", as well as other mission work. The Lord blessed his labours in America. He secured a motor car, and travelled thousands of miles from State to State, testifying of the grace of the Lord, and the crying need of the Gospel in Russia. The Lord everywhere crowned his efforts with much blessing. In this work he was often assisted by Rev. Oswald J. Smith of the Toronto Gospel Tabernacle, and other Christian leaders.

His personal spiritual experiences, his genuine conversion, and his great God given gift and ability to bring vividly before the people the need of his own country, has easily advanced Mr. Billester as a foremost representative on behalf of Russian mission work throughout the American continent. He enjoys the fullest confidence of all who come in contact with him, and churches and missions both in the U.S.A. and Canada, who have had the privilege of securing his services as deputation missionary, have been glad to have him come back again and again.

For the last two years by special arrangement, Mr. Billester has been "loaned" by the Russian Missionary Society to The World-Wide Christian Couriers for extensive deputation work. Now he is again taking up his duties in connection with the Russian Missionary Society, and has been given the the position of our leader for the American continent. In the stress, strain, and manifold difficulties in connection with the Russian Missionary Society and The Russian Faith Mission, nothing has been able to shake the confidence and love of Mr. and Mrs. Billester toward the great mission work carried on in Eastern Europe under the leadership of its Founder and General Director, Pastor William Fetler, and his principal associates in Europe, Dr. A. McCaig, Principal Emeritus of Spurgeon's College, and Mr. Charles Phillips, F.R.G.S., Chief Treasurer of our Society, as well as Rev. F. J. Miles, our General Secretary, and others.

Mr. and Mrs. Billester are at present on an extensive missionary journey to the mission fields of Poland and Eastern Europe, accompanied everywhere by marks of divine blessing. They are shortly due to return to the U.S.A., where they will be in charge of our office on the American Continent at 721, No. Stanley Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

Meanwhile, in their absence, funds are greatly needed on the mission field, especially since the fall of the English pound. The financial Board of The Russian Missionary Society, and The Russian Faith Mission, request all friends who are interested in supporting a really genuine soul winning work among the Russian people, to co-operate and support this work most liberally and regularly.

All gifts, correspondence, and enquiries from U.S.A. and Canada, should be addressed to Rev. Michael Billester, Home Director, Russian Faith Mission, 721, North Stanley Avenue, Los Angeles, California, or to Mrs. A. E. Billester, Treasurer.

All checks should be made payable to The Russian Faith Mission, Los Angeles, California.

Mr. Charles Phillips has been Treasurer-in-chief of Pastor Fetler's work for twenty years, and still retains his confidence, love, and fellowship for the work and its leader. Special enquiries that interested friends desire to make, can be addressed to Mr. Phillips, or to Rev. F. J. Miles, General Secretary, 43, Newington Butts, London, S. E. 11, England.

"Glory to God in the highest," Luke 2 : 14

"For unto us a Child is born unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9: 6.

The Rev. Mr. Miles was on active service during the war, as Chief Chaplain of the Australian Forces, and has been decorated by the King of England, receiving the Order of the British Empire, and the Distinguished Service Order. He is highly esteemed in Great Britain and Australia, and was the President of The Christian Endeavour Union for Great Britain and Ireland in 1930 and 1931.

All these men stand firmly by the glorious soul winning work carried on in many parts of Europe by faithful missionaries.

We can safely say that there has not been, nor is, any other Russian missionary organization in any part of the world, which has been, and is still as much used in actual soul winning, and spiritual work, than this which we are privileged to represent.

Pray for us.

"HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US".

By Rev. M. Billester.

Marvellous indeed has been the leading of God these many years. Varied have been our experiences, but with Samuel we can say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us".

Ever since 1914, when the Lord spoke peace to my heart and the wonderful joy of His salvation filled my soul, I had but one prayer, and one longing in my heart, and that was that I might preach the Gospel of power and deliverance to my native people. Years, however, passed, and although God enabled me to preach the Gospel to English speaking people throughout the western Provinces of Canada, it was not until 1924, that God gave me the privilege to preach the Gospel in my native land. It came about in this way.

In 1924, God led us to meet Pastor William Fetler in Toronto, Canada, through whom we learned much about the blessing of God in Russia, Poland, and adjacent countries, wherever Russians were found. At the first meeting our hearts were strangely warmed toward this man. Never had we met a man with such enthusiasm for missions and for souls! His heart was on fire to see men and women brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. His messages stirred our hearts, and soon I was led of the Lord to resign my Pastorate in The Gospel Tabernacle, Peterborough, Canada, and join Pastor Fetler's forces in Europe.

Three weeks after that we were in Warsaw, Poland, and a few days later we were on the field actually preaching the Gospel of His Grace to the hungry multitudes. Here we found that what we heard from Pastor Fetler's lips in Canada was a living reality and the half had not been told! Wherever we went we saw hungry multitudes crowding the largest available halls to their utmost capacity. Oh, how easy it was to preach to them. How quickly they seemed to grasp the Gospel and respond to the invitation. Every altar was filled with penitent souls, and truly we found once again the Gospel to be the power of God unto salvation.

From 1924 to 1927 our association with Pastor Fetler and The Russian Missionary Society was one happy and glorious fellowship, and every dollar we raised, and every prayer we offered, went for the support of the work, upon which the signal blessing of God was resting.

I had not been on the field since 1925, and it was not until last year that I again had the privilege of seeing multitudes of European faces before me, and again raised the banner of the Cross before them. Arriving in Riga, I felt as though I had arrived in my own native home town. Here again I found Pastor Fetler "holding the ropes". Here again I heard him preach in the great Salvation Temple, and once again he warmed my heart with the faithfulness of his messages. He poured out his soul in prayer, not only for the world, and his friends, but also for his enemies. Would to God that those who have opposed the work of this God-chosen man, would rather lend him a helping hand, in order that Russia's millions might find Christ, and Him crucified.

Since my return to America, our hearts have not been at rest. Pastor Fetler and his associates have been on our minds and in our prayers daily. We seem to have found no resting place in America, and as it were, were compelled to return to Europe to aid the ministry of love for Christ, and the Russian people. Through the help of personal friends in California, Mrs. Billester and I again were enabled to visit the mission field without any expense whatever to the Society. Again we saw the blessing of God resting upon the ministry of Pastor Fetler, and his missionaries.

We had the privilege of being present at the opening and dedication of the new "Dom Evangelia", (Gospel Hall) in Paris, France, which was largely built through the generosity of one of God's faithful stewards in Ireland. Our happiness knew no bounds when together from the same platform, we once again proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ, and saw the Russian refugees respond definitely to the invitation of the Gospel.

From Paris we went to Poland, and met at a conference in my native town, Pruzhany, a group of faithful missionaries who have been with Pastor Fetler from the very beginning of The Russian Missionary Society in 1921. Here we saw their soul winning fervour. My personal contact, during the three days of conference in Pruzhany, with these missionaries, who have, by the help of God, been used to win thousands of souls to Christ, moved me to throw in my lot again with them.

The International Council of The Russian Missionary Society has requested me to become Home Director of the R.M.S. and the R.F.M. for U.S.A. and Canada, and it is with pleasure and joy that I have accepted their offer. May I ask the readers of "The Friend of Missions" to earnestly pray that God may enable me to stand by the Russian people in their terrible hour of need.

While in London, I had the privilege of meeting the members of The International Council of the R.M.S., and to learn from them of the splendid financial working of the Society. The whole expenditure of the Society is worked out on a definite budget plan, which is approved by the Financial Board of The International Council, and administered by the Treasurer-in-chief, Mr. Charles Phillips, a Christian gentleman of independent means, who has been associated with Pastor Fetler for more than twenty years as his Treasurer. There is no one who knows more about the administration of the Society than Mr. Phillips, who is unreservedly giving himself to this great work. He is well known in Christian circles of Great Britain, and highly esteemed by all who know him, for his business ability and utter unselfishness.

What I have just witnessed on the mission field in Eastern Europe is deserving of the utmost confidence of God's people everywhere. Therefore, may I, on behalf of this worthy work, appeal to God's stewards throughout America, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and other parts of the world, to rally to the support of this missionary enterprise.

God is blessing. God is calling. Answer now.

All gifts and enquiries can be sent in the United States and Canada to, The Russian Faith Mission, 721, North Stanley Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

Yours in Christ's service for the winning of souls,

M i c h a e l B i l l e s t e r,

Home Director for U.S.A. and Canada.

Sermon preached by Rev. F. J. Miles at the Dedication of Dom Evangelia, Paris, France.

The Rev. F. J. Miles' text was Psalm 127 : 1 "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

THE MESSAGE:

"A city is made of houses. A city is filled with people. A church is made up of disciples of Jesus Christ. Christ is the real builder of a nation. He is the only builder of a church, and He alone can build up our lives and make them worth while. Some one says, "Give me a proof of the inspiration of the Bible", and I answer, "The Jew". One cannot look on the Jew unless one sees the handywork of God. The Jew has been persecuted. He has had no land in which to live, and no nation to call his own. Yet the Jews still remain a distinct race. Other peoples go from other nations to America, and become Americans, but Jews go there and remain Jews, because of their religion and their relationship to Jehovah. It is only the union of the Jews to Jehovah that preserves them. They have been saved just because they belong to God. It is God who builds the nation. He builds up princes and pulls down kings.

God will yet save Russia if Russia will turn to Him. As of old when God looked down and saw the suffering of His people, so He is looking with sympathy on the suffering of the Russian people to-day, and so will He do in the proper day for Russia, and deliver them. It is for us to pray, and work so that God can save Russia. No nation can challenge God, and continue to do it. Russia has banished God's Book, has persecuted His Church, and God will not always allow this to continue. Russia will have to be brought to her knees before God. The Soviets will have to confess they cannot go on by themselves. We must pray that Russia will give over the building of the nation to God.

This morning it is important to know that God builds the Church. Nations and governments build the cities, but people, however rich or powerful, working in their own strength, cannot build the Church. Jesus Christ said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus Christ's Church abides. Sects or denominations may rise or fall, but the Church that Jesus Christ builds is eternal, yet the great and glorious God is generous enough to give us a part in this building, and there are things we can do in co-operating with God in the building of this Church.

The church is built through our supplication. Much prayer has gone up for the building of this place. Much more prayer will go up for the building of the church in this place. Your Brothers and Sisters in the other countries of Europe, will be praying for the real building of Christ in this hall, and you will be able to pray to God, and can help build by the power of your prayer. It is not that God is unwilling to help us. It is not that God cannot build the Church without us, but he delights to give us the opportunity of working with Him. It is not that we have to pray to persuade God to do something He does not want to do. He wants to bless us, and to use us, and when we pray we get into His mind and His Spirit. We can get to know His mind and His will. Through prayer we are made into one Spirit with Him. Thus we are brought into the condition of mind and heart, where God can use us in the building of His Church. God uses us to build the Church by the power of His service. There are different kinds of service we can render. Many kinds of tools are used in the making of a table. Many kinds of human tools are necessary in building the Church.

It was very beautiful last night to see many young people come in to work. All were busy. Some were cleaning floors, some were cleaning windows, and doing many humble things in order that this church would be ready to-day. It was a beautiful spirit of service, and God receives that kind of service as heartily as He receives our preaching, if it is done as "unto Him". This church will be built up as we all work together, as each one contributes his or her part. Through prayer we can seek to know God's mind, and do whatever we can in the church to fit into His plan.

If we pray, and if we serve it will mean sacrifice. The Church of God is built on sacrifice and through sacrifice. Jesus Christ purchased the Church by His Own Blood on Calvary. Because Jesus Christ died in our stead on the Cross, because He shed His precious blood to wash away our sin, it was possible to be built. You must have a good foundation to erect your building on, and God has a good foundation for His Church. There is no other foundation laid except Jesus Christ. We are to pray, and build this church through Jesus Christ, not for the glory of the denomination or society, but for the glory of Christ. Just as the Church began through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, just so will our church through our sacrifice. If we are of the mind of Christ we will have our things in order to build up the Church of Christ.

When Mrs. Wakefield Richardson gave her money for this hall, I understand it was at a great sacrifice, and while we thank God for that, and while we are very grateful to her, it is very beautiful to know that we can give with the same spirit of sacrifice, and by our sacrifice, we can serve God in the building up of the church. We have this joy of knowing that out of sacrifice there comes song.

There is a story concerning the Old Temple. When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also. So sacrifice in building up the church will also begin in song. So with sacrifice we will sing, and the more we sacrifice, the more we shall sing, and while we pray and sacrifice and sing, we must remember it is God who builds the Church. It is God who gives us the power to pray, and the power to serve, and Who gives us the spirit of sacrifice. Only as we do these things for Him can He build up the Church. So then, let us give ourselves to worship and to work. To worthy worship, so that it may issue into worthy work, that through us as His tools, He may build the Church to His honor and glory through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

LETTER FROM PASTEUR SAILLENS.

At the opening service of the Paris Dom Evangelia (Russian Gospel Hall) the following message was received from the veteran French Preacher of the Gospel, Pasteur R. Saillens: —

September 26th, 1931.

"My dear Mr. Phillips: —

It would be a great pleasure to assist at the opening of a new house for the preaching of the pure Gospel of Christ in our crowded city. But I have the 'grippe,' and must stay indoors for some days, so I shall not be able to be with you, except in the spirit. May the Lord's blessing be upon the new chapel and upon all your efforts for the advancement of His kingdom. At some future time I hope I shall be able to visit the place and to speak in it.

Yours very truly in Christ,

R. S a i l l e n s."

CRIES OF HELP FROM RUSSIA

By Rev. C. H. Fluegge. Translated by F. E. K.

(Continued from page 109)

4. MEN ARE ALMOST IN DESPAIR.

30th. January, 1930.

"If you still remember me, I do not know. For you are at present sitting in happiness, and we really don't know what is going to happen. We shall, as one expresses it, be hunted with all dogs. Now it has gone so far that one would rather die than live through it.

Now follows blow upon blow,

so that one cannot recover consciousness. A month and a half ago it was in comparison with the present quite mild. While everywhere seed corn is lacking, yet it will be ordered that all shall be sown, so each will have a certain figure imposed, and he who does not supply it will literally be turned out of doors. What he has of goods and even the clothes on his body must be given up, and he must put on torn ones. Not a pillow or a blanket nor even any underclothes will be left to him. They have no pity even with little children. Think of it, even barbers must furnish seed corn. Then you can understand how it fares with us farmers.

J. H. D. and J. E. still remain, the former here in our town; but he has nothing to give up, nothing, not even underclothing. The latter is probably still there where he was taken, for we can hear nothing of him.

Knock there at every door,

and see if you can soften the hearts of men to help us, for if there is long delay, even for a month and a half, then we are lost. **Men are almost in despair.** Help! Help!

The papers write that special measures will be taken against those who are specially poor, to transport them and send them to the far north to Siberia, or the forests, where they can fell trees. In our local paper yesterday was the order

to clear out the class of Kulaks,

and the order was an urgent telegraphic one. Now on that account will measures be taken that one cannot even think of. To-day already by this has everything been recorded, yes everything, each handkerchief etc., although there was no reason so to act, for already they have acted up to the demands of the government. What comes of this is already clearly being said: It gives them a stick in the hand to drive out people from their farms. With regard to the other things judgment has already been given.

Whoever does not join the collective organization will be treated as a Kulak, and also driven out. Nothing can be sold, no horse, no cow, no calf, nothing, nothing, nothing. Can you imagine our condition, now in winter, to be deprived of everything, and without anything to sit on in the streets! If my writing is very bad, don't wonder, for we are so agitated. What is now happening is a complete outrage on all human rights and feelings.

Save us, save us!

That which we were experiencing on the 1st January was very much easier, a rosy life compared to this. I will stop. I can write no more. I am one of the many who look with longing for deliverance!

We wish Proverbs 24 : 10-12 to be said concerning us."

5. SUFFOCATED IN HOT ROOMS.

3rd February, 1930.

"I would like to tell you much, but I cannot trust it to paper. Ah, if only we could get away from here! L. and J. were again sent home from Moscow in cattle trucks for nine days and nights, and H. came five weeks later. They write that he was so thin he could scarcely be recognised; he had terrible experiences, poor H. When he reached home the house was empty, there was no food, no money, nothing. Those who were arrested in Moscow have been terribly treated, beaten, suffocated, etc. We live here without work, for no one dare employ us. Bread can only be got by those with bread-cards, and those we have not got, but those who don't need all their bread give us some out of pity. We wait only that the government will let us out, and that Germany will receive us."

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6. WE LIVE HERE ONLY IN ANXIETY.

3rd February, 1930.

"Here at ——— a man had gone away on account of fear and his wife was at home with the children. All was taken away from her, and she was driven out and

no one dared to take her in,

although it is a time of frost. Then she took refuge in a straw-heap; her children are frozen to death. There is such distress here; it is continually getting worse. He who sowed corn last year must this year sow still more, and we have nothing. **We live here only in anxiety.** So many tears are flowing here in this sad land. We think you are very fortunate to be there. You have not to go through this cold winter here; you are fortunate that you are there, where you enjoy so much that is good. Praise be to the Lord! K. writes in a letter that he regards himself as one of the elect! No ticket can be obtained here farther than to———, so that no Mennonite can get away. Up to now everything is closed for us. Can no prayer help? Still we do not give up praying; we have still a God Who helps, and a Lord Who saves from death. We can do nothing else here except cry. Do not be discouraged in praying for us! We still have always fine meetings, the choir sings well. Here in the corner there is rest so to speak, but for how long we do not know. Our young brothers have all been sent beyond———. They are having a very bad time; the food is very bad, and they must work hard, always be kept in close confinement, and know not why. They cannot keep any Sunday; only

the fifth day is their rest day,

and then indeed they get no rest. Three men have again been arrested on account of preaching and holding meetings; they must not hold meetings again.

Here now we live all together.

Since M. R. was killed, everything is different here. We cannot forget the murder. We have suffered that also — the anxiety — only we have not been shot, and that stands always before our eyes. O., who was the elder in———, is also imprisoned, because he preached. A. W. is very poor, they have nothing at all to eat."

(To be continued)

SACRED ART CALENDAR, 1932.

We are glad to inform our friends that we have for sale a quantity of the Sacred Art Calendars for next year. These Calendars, besides containing some very beautiful reproductions of famous Scriptural pictures, give a text for each day in the year, and some interesting and valuable information concerning the work of the Russian Missionary Society, which will serve as a reminder for prayer. Please send your order early to R. M. S. 43, Newington Butts, London, S. E. 11. The price is 1/3 per copy, post free.